Silver Messenger

Supporting Seniors and Their Families

March 2012

Frederick County Department of Aging · 1440 Taney Avenue · Frederick, MD 21702 · FrederickCountyMd.gov/DOA · 301.600.1605

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Thank you for your interest in our Silver Messenger newsletter! We hope you find the information valuable and informative. Please email us with any questions or comments: DeptOfAging@FrederickCountyMd.gov

We have begun our transformation into an Aging and Disability Resource Center! The initial phase of this initiative is the creation of the **Maryland Access**

Point or MAP. MAP will facilitate streamlined access to information and services for Frederick County's older adults and individuals who have disabling or chronic conditions. Partnering with community agencies is an essential component, with collaboration, education and communication as the foundation. Kathy Schey will be coordinating this initiative and can be contacted at 301.600.3520 or KSchey@FrederickCountyMd.gov.



To All Book Readers - Frederick's <u>Book Club</u> meets each month! Please join us for our lively discussions.

<u>Bingo!</u> is held each Tuesday at the Frederick Senior Center – please join us.

Nutritious Meals are served at our Senior Centers and the Feagaville Nutritional Site. Please call 48 hours in advance for meal reservations:



Frederick 301.600.1048 Urbana 301.600.7020 Emmitsburg 301.600.6350 Brunswick 301.834.8115 Feagaville 301.662.9241

Would you like to <u>Volunteer</u> at the Department of Aging? We need those with the

following skills/ knowledge:

Answering phones Clerical

Medicare/Medicaid Drivers for meal delivery

We provide free **Blood Pressure Checks** each Tuesday at 10am at the Frederick Senior Center.

Need help with your tax returns? Our VITA volunteers can assist seniors and adults with disabilities. Phone 301.600.1605 to schedule an appointment.

Senior Health Insurance Program (SHIP)

staff are available to assist Medicare beneficiaries and their caregivers with insurance counseling. Please call 301.600.1604 to make an appointment.

The Board of County Commissioners approved the **Senior Tax Credit** effective with the July 1, 2012 tax bill. This is a supplement to the current Frederick County Homeowner Tax Credit. The state will administer the credit as part of the Homeowner Tax Credit program.

TransIT Plus tickets are available at the 1440 Taney Avenue location - \$10 for a 10 punch card. This saves \$.50 each way. TransIT discount cards are also available for seniors and adults with disabilities - \$5 for a 10 punch card. Identification is required.

May is Older Americans Month We will have a Proclamation and a Health Fair on April 19th. The film "Over 90 and Loving It" will be shown at each Senior Center. Check our website for related events.

From the Staff Lounge......

A few words with **Carolyn True / Director** of the Frederick County Department of Aging:

Change. It has different meanings - from what jingles in your pocket to seasonal differences to new names. Change is what you make it and how you choose to embrace it. Over the next several years, we will begin to review how we have traditionally provided services in all our programs and activities. What may have worked at one time may no longer be as viable. In addition to new grant initiatives, we have already been experimenting with evening hours at the Urbana Senior Center, have added afternoon fitness classes in Frederick and Brunswick and will experiment with a café style lunch setting later this year. If grant funding is secured, we will embark on a needs assessment of the older adult population that can offer us a strategic view of the future needs of the older adult community. Our goal is to ensure that we are positioned to meet the needs of Frederick County citizens as we age in place, and growing numbers of people call Frederick County "home."

We offer **Day Trips!** Costs range from \$25-\$45. Some of the trips include the National Air & Space Museum, the Baltimore Museum of Art, and the Smithsonian National Zoo. Call 301.600.7020 to sign up now – spots are limited.

The <u>Frederick Senior Center</u> will be hosting Early **Voting** March 26-29 – call 301.600.1605 for details.

Check out our **Blue Book** resource guide -- it is an invaluable tool for services to Frederick County seniors.

The <u>Emmitsburg Senior Center</u> will host Monday art classes beginning in March teaching all forms via <u>Frederick Community College's Institute for Learning in Retirement</u>. Call 301.6350 for information.

School of Nursing to be a clinical site for students completing course work in Community Nursing for the past four years. These students learn about older adults living at home successfully with assistance from programs like Meals on Wheels. In addition, they are present in all seniors centers weekly to provide blood pressure screenings, answer questions about health concerns and present information on current health topics. Meet these talented nurses each Thursday at any senior center.

Our Wish List Like all of us, our funding only reaches so far, and our Centers often desire to expand existing programs. The current Wish List follows; details are available on our website and at each Center.

FREDERICK SENIOR CENTER: financial donations toward the purchase of chairs (\$50/each) and round tables (\$125/each) for the dining room.

CAREGIVER PROGRAM: donations of adult diapers (tab and pull up) in sizes small and medium.

MEALS ON WHEELS: donations of gift cards (gas, coffee shops, etc) in \$5 and \$10 amounts for the April volunteer appreciation event.

URBANA SENIOR CENTER: large edition Rummikub game, reams of color paper, volunteers to deliver meals in the Ijamsville, New Market, and Adamstown communities.

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What is "Observation" Status?

As a Medicare recipient, your physician will determine your "status" in the event you require hospital care. Medicare recognizes two "status" – *Inpatient* and *Observation* – both of which are provided in the hospital, however have two different definitions:

<u>Observation status</u> – Is outpatient care, provided in a hospital bed, intended for completing treatment, tests or services to determine if further inpatient care is need.

Specifically, Observation is used for:

- Evaluating a patient for possible admission
- ➤ Treating patients expected to be stabilized and released in 24 to 48 hours (must be well documented over 24 hours)
- > Treating complications following outpatient surgery or procedures
- Evaluating an unconfirmed acute diagnosis

Observation is NOT used for:

- Patients who need therapeutic procedures that are routinely provided in an outpatient setting
- ➤ A patient awaiting nursing home placement (NHP)
- > Routine prep or recovery prior to or following diagnostic or surgical procedures
- Convenience for the patient, family, hospital, or physician

What is the purpose of Observation?

- > Allows physician to observe patient in the hospital versus discharging to home, and,
- Avoids potentially unnecessary inpatient admissions and costs which could be expensive for patients and families or the hospital.

<u>Inpatient Status</u> - is used when the physician makes a decision based on the severity of symptoms, medical needs, past medical history, potential complications and risks that the care needed to treat a particular illness cannot be provided in a lower level of care and the expectation is that the symptoms will not resolve quickly.

Critical reminders about Inpatient care:

- ➤ Medicare will not pay for inpatient care based on social situations: payment is made based on medical conditions and needed treatments.
- ➤ Once a patient has completed his or her medical treatment, Medicare expects that discharge will occur so it is critical that discharge planning begin as soon as possible after admission to the hospital.

What if I start out in Observation and need more care?

➤ The case manager will work with your physician to ensure the appropriate change is made regarding your status.

How Does Status impact you and your hospitalization?

- ➤ If you are a Medicare patient, your observation/outpatient stay does not count toward your 3 day inpatient stay requirement to qualify for admission for a skilled nursing facility.
- ➤ While in an observation/outpatient status, you may be responsible for any out of pocket expenses, such as co-payments, deductibles, in accordance with your specific insurance plan. Co-payments and deductibles may be higher.